



Via Certified Mail

February 25, 2025

Anderson Towing LLC
Anderson Towing & Recovery
Anderson Towing 1 through 13
Anderson Towing Belgrade
Anderson Towing Bozeman
Anderson Towing Four Corners
c/o Registered Agent Cameron Cochran
P.O. Box 80067
Billings, MT 59108

and

5708 Chicago Road
Shepherd, MT 59079

RE: Permanent Removal from the Billings Local Rotation System

Dear Anderson Towing LLC:

Be advised that effectively immediately Anderson Towing LLC, and all businesses acting under its Assumed Business Names (collectively "Anderson Towing"), are permanently removed from the Billings local tow truck rotation system. The City of Billings received informal complaints from citizens regarding excessive invoices received from Anderson Towing following local rotation calls. During its investigation into these complaints, the City of Billings became aware that Anderson Towing had been suspended from Montana's tow truck rotation system from November 1, 2024, through April 30, 2025, due to charging unreasonable and unnecessary amounts. Specifically, to a business whose vehicle had been involved in a fatal accident in Bozeman, Montana. A copy of the Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Decision in the Tow Truck Complaint Resolution Committee in *In the Matter of: Kenyon Noble Lumber & Hardware v. Anderson Towing, LLC*, Record No. 2448104 is enclosed and is incorporated herein by reference.

In that matter, Kenyon Noble Lumber presented Terry Morrison as an expert witness in the Montana towing industry. Mr. Morrison was recognized as such an expert by the Tow Truck Complaint Resolution Committee. In preparation for his testimony, Mr. Morrison obtained invoices from several Montana locations within which Anderson Towing conducted business, including Billings. Mr. Morrison reviewed these invoices to form an opinion on whether the tow bill received by the business was fair and equitable based on what was usual and customary for

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the industry. *See Findings*, p. 5. A review of Mr. Morrison's summaries shows that Anderson Towing's invoices averaged in the thousands of dollars (i.e., over \$2,750) while five other tow truck companies' invoices averaged well below \$1,000. These summaries also showed that Anderson Towing charged \$500 traffic control and \$100 lien processing fee on *every* invoice. Additionally, Anderson Towing charged an average of \$384 administrative fee. In comparison, none of the other companies charged a lien processing fee, and most of the companies charged no traffic control, and when traffic control was charged, it was \$100 or less. The administrative fees were also significantly less than what Anderson Towing charged.

Some of Mr. Morrison's expert opinions in the above matter are as follows:

Mileage fees typically are \$4-\$6 per mile. Anderson Towing charged \$110.60 to tow 4 miles. This charge was unreasonable for a 4-mile trip.

The \$500 charge for traffic control signs, cones and warning lights is not usual and customary for the type of accident. "It was hard for him to even understand what was used for traffic control in this instance ... " "[I]n 100% of Anderson's tow bills reviewed by him, \$500 was charged every time. In his opinion, the \$500 charge was not usual or customary."

A lien processing fee is triggered when a vehicle is not retrieved. "In this instance, the vehicle was retrieved in nine days so there was no reason to begin the lien process. In his review, Anderson was the only company to charge a lien fee and it was charged 100% of the time on the Anderson invoices he reviewed."

The owner of Anderson Towing, Cameron Cochran, testified in defense of Anderson Towing. Upon information and belief, Mr. Cochran owns all the businesses associated with Anderson Towing's Assumed Business Names. Under oath, Mr. Cochran testified that he oversees billing procedures and rates for Anderson Towing, that he reviewed invoices of Montana companies and the prices they charge for towing, and in his opinion that the Anderson Towing prices were appropriate and the \$6,754.66 invoice to Kenyon Noble Lumber was reasonable, except for a mileage discrepancy.

The City of Billings finds it concerning that the owner of Anderson Towing found no issue with its billing practices after comparing how other tow truck companies in Montana charge.

The Tow Truck Complaint Resolution Committee found that many parts of Anderson Towing's invoice were unreasonable and unnecessary, including the amount charged for mileage, charging a \$500 traffic control fee, and charging a lien processing fee of \$100. Also, the 10% administrative fee was based on the overall tow bill. "By inflating charges and charging for services that are wholly unnecessary, Anderson further unreasonably inflated its administrative fee."

Following a review of the above decision, the City of Billings submitted a public records request to the Department of Justice for complaints against Anderson Towing. Several complaints were filed by citizens in Billings, and the issues included inconsistencies in disclosing prices, inconsistencies with pick up hours, unreasonable charges (expert witness opined \$5,575 was

reasonable for a \$33,050 invoice), and overcharges (\$500 traffic control, \$100 lien processing fee).

Through further investigation, the City of Billings learned that several other tow truck companies operating in Billings do *not* charge for traffic control at all within city limits or charge \$100 or less if the city police are not already on scene. Additionally, these other companies charge mileage within the usual and customary range of \$4-\$6 as opined by Mr. Morrison.

Anderson Towing was on notice as of October 21, 2024, (date of the Kenyon Findings) that it was charging unreasonable and unnecessary charges to citizens of Billings. Anderson Towing did *not* stop making these charges as demonstrated by a subsequent complaint received by the City of Billings related to Anderson Towing on February 10, 2025, invoice Call #53354 (attached). In that incident, Anderson Towing charged \$500 for traffic control signs, cones, warning lights, \$100 lien processing fee, \$157.95 administrative fee, and \$49.60 for mileage (at \$8.00/mile). The complainant related to this invoice confirmed that Billings Police Department arrived at the accident scene before Anderson Towing and that Anderson Towing did not place any visible cones or signs at the accident scene.

Mr. Morrison's expert opinions in Kenyon Noble Lumber are applicable to this invoice and support the conclusion that Anderson Towing unreasonably and unnecessarily charged the complainant a minimum of \$700. Additionally, the complainant was advised by two other tow truck operators that they would have charged \$400-\$850 for the same tow. Anderson Towing charged a total of \$1,737.47 for a 6.2 mile-roundtrip, three-day storage.

The Billings Police Department adopted a local law enforcement rotation system in the City of Billings, Mont. Code Ann. § 61-8-908(9). The City of Billings and the Billings Police Department (administrator of local rotation system) cannot allow Anderson Towing to unnecessarily and unreasonably charge Billings citizens for tow services.

As such, Anderson Towing is removed from Billings' local rotation system, effective the date of this letter. Additionally, this applies to all businesses acting under the Assumed Business Names of Anderson Towing. This decision is permanent and will not be reconsidered for the reasons stated above, including a willful and consistent failure by Anderson Towing to treat Billings citizens in a fair and equitable manner consistent with recognized tow truck standards.

Respectfully,



Rich St. John
Chief of Police



Anderson Towing LLC Billings

P.O. Box 80067, BILLINGS MT 59108
Phone: (406) 894-2566 | Fax:

Impound Invoice

Printed 2/10/2025

Released To

Call # 53354
Account Police calls to Anderson Towing Billings
Date/Time Impounded: 2/8/2025 1:21 PM
Date/Time Released: 2/10/2025 11:22 AM
Days Held in Impound: 3 days

Reason for Impound Accident

VIN Number

Model

License Plate

Drivable

Keys

Towed from

Stored at

Yes

Yes on the board

6th Avenue North & North 27th Street, 6th Ave N & N

27th St, Billings, MT 59101

Anderson Towing Billings

1202 South 32nd Street West, Billings MT 59102

Notes: Rotation #LLC

BPD

Air Bags Deployed

Call BPD with era

Release Notes:

Storage charges	Quantity	Price	Line Total
(Storage - Storage Fees) Impounds/Storage: Daily Impound Rate	3	\$75.00	\$225.00
Towing charges	Quantity	Price	Line Total
(Towing) Call Out	1	\$150.00	\$150.00
(Towing) Tow/Hook Fee	1	\$350.00	\$350.00
(Towing) Traffic Control Signs, Cones, Warning Lights	1	\$500.00	\$500.00
(Towing) Mileage	6.2	\$8.00	\$49.60
(Towing) Fuel Surcharge	1	\$79.92	\$79.92
(Towing) Gate Fee	1	\$125.00	\$125.00
(Towing) Lien Processing Fee	1	\$100.00	\$100.00
(Towing) Admin Fee	1	\$157.95	\$157.95
Towing SubTotal			\$1,512.47
Storage - Storage Fees SubTotal			\$225.00
Subtotal			\$1,737.47
Taxes			\$0.00
Grand Total			\$1,737.47
Amount Due:			\$0.00 / Paid
Cash payment of \$1,737.47 applied on 2/10/2025			

Upon signing this document I am freely admitting that I have the legal right to authorize Anderson Towing LLC to recover and tow my vehicles. I also agree and understand that circumstances outside Anderson Towing LLC control, with regard to the accident involving my vehicle, may make recovery and removal of my vehicle unusually difficult. I unconditionally release, waive and discharge my right, whether by contract or under operation of the law to file cause of actions(s) or claim(s) which I may have against Anderson Towing LLC now or in the future.

I hereby assume any and all risk of loss, liability, damage or costs, and understand that any and all damages that may occur will be as a result of the accident not as the result of any negligence on the part of Anderson Towing LLC.

Signature:

Date: